Information about the doctoral defence ceremony for Doctorate Committee members

Defence ceremony locations
The University of Amsterdam has two defence ceremony locations:
- The Aula: Handboogstraat 6, main entrance Singel 411.
- The Agnietenkapel: Oudezijds Voorburgwal 229-231.

Both locations are in Amsterdam's city centre, which makes them difficult to reach by car, it is almost impossible to park anywhere nearby. The nearest parking garages are Rokin, Stopera, or Bijenkorf.

The Agnietenkapel can be reached via public transport by tram lines 4, 14, 24 and metro 52, stop Rokin. You can report to the doorman at the entrance. There is an elevator in the building.

The Aula can be reached by tram, using lines 2 and 12, stop Koningsplein, and lines 4, 14, 24 and metro 52, stop Rokin. You are expected at the back entrance of the Auditorium, Handboogstraat 6. You can report to the Office of the Beadle, first door on the right.

Dress code
All members of the committee are allowed to attend in cap and gown (see: https://www.uva.nl/en/content/news/news/2023/12/entire-phd-defence-committee-may-now-wear-gowns.html). Please bring your own gown if possible. If you cannot bring a gown of your own, you can borrow one. You can help yourself to one of the gowns, caps and shirt fronts in the gown room.

The defence ceremony
In the Aula defence ceremonies start at 11:00 or 14:00h. Defence ceremonies in the Agnietenkapel start at 10:00, 13:00, 14:00, or 16:00h. You can arrive half an hour in advance. There is a gown room with lockers for your valuables at both locations. Larger items can be left at the guarded cloakroom. Do not leave your coat/bag in the deliberation room. The Doctorate Committee's preliminary deliberation commences 15 minutes prior to the defence ceremony, at the latest. This deliberation takes place in the Senaatskamer of the Aula (immediately on the left when entering the building) or in the Athenaeumkamer of the Agnietenkapel (on the first floor). During the preliminary deliberation, the chairperson will review the defence ceremony protocol.

The Doctorate Committee does not attend the doctoral candidate's layman's talk during the first 15 minutes of the defence ceremony. On request, the talk can be viewed via the livestream. The beadle collects the Committee and guides them into the hall where 45 minutes of opposition and defence follows. After the beadle has pronounced the ‘hora est’, the Committee withdraws for a (brief) deliberation. The supervisor asks the Committee members if they agree with granting the doctoral degree. There is opportunity for a short evaluation of the defence ceremony. All those present sign the degree certificate and complete some further paperwork. Subsequently, the Committee returns to the hall for the conferral of the doctorate, the awarding of the degree certificate and the laudation. The ceremony will end no more than 90 minutes after its commencement. Right after the defence ceremony, there is an opportunity to congratulate the doctor in the reception area. On most occasions that is also where the reception will take place, although sometimes it is held at another location. You will be informed of this by the doctoral candidate or their attendants. The reception at the defence location usually lasts for about 1 hour.